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Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 EB-11 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 OIC-04

AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 NEA-14 SS-20 NSC-07 L-03 H-03

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P 282158Z MAY 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL MONTREAL PRIORITY

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E.O.: 11652 N/A
TAGS: ICAO, ETRN, CA
SUBJECT: ICAO-BELGIAN PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE COUNCIL.
REF: MONTREAL 751

1. THE US DOES NOT FAVOR EXPANSION IN MEMBERSHIP OF THE ICAO COUNCIL, AND WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE ANY ACTION BY COUNCIL WHICH SEEMED TO ENDORSE BELGIAN PROPOSAL.

2. ICAO COUNCIL EXPANDED ONLY YEAR AGO, FROM 27 TO 30, AND NOT ENOUGH TIME HAS ELAPSED FOR ADEQUATE ASSESSMENT TO BE MADE OF SUITABILITY OF PRESENT SIZE. FURTHERMORE, ICAO COUNCIL IS EXCEPTIONAL AS IT MEETS IN PERMANENT SESSION REQUIRING CONTINUOUS AND COSTLY PRESENCE OF NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES AND SUPPORT STAFFS IN MONTREAL- RISK OF ABSENTEEISM, AND CONSEQUENT WEAKENING OF COUNCIL ROLE, INCREASES AS COUNCIL EXPANDED- MOREOVER, FURTHER EXPANSION OF COUNCIL WOULD INVOLVE IMPORTANT BUDGETARY AND SPACE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH WOULD FLOW FROM ANY EXPANSION OF THE
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COUNCIL (EXPANDED SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDING DOC-

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UMENTATION, INTERPRETATION, ACCOMMODATION FACILITATION). THEREFORE ANY SUCH PROPOSAL MUST BE CONSIDERED CAREFULLY FROM THIS POINT OF VIEW ALSO.

3. ESSENTIALLY WE FEEL COUNCIL OF 30 IS ADEQUATE TO ASSURE FAIR REPRESENTATION, AND REPRESENTS UPWARD PRACTICAL LIMIT

FOR BODY IN PERMANENT SESSION. PRESENT SIZE PROVIDES FOR REPRESENTATION OF ROUGHLY ONE-QUARTER OF ICAO MEMBERSHIP, WHICH PRESENTLY IS THE ROUGH NORM IN THE UN SYSTEM IN WHICH EXECUTIVE BODIES ARE NOT ELSEWHERE IN PERMANENT SESSION. INDEED, FACT THAT ICAO COUNCIL IS IN PERMANENT SESSION ARGUES FOR LOWER RATIO.

4. FOR REASONS SET OUT PARAS 2 AND 3 ABOVE, US REPRESENTATIVE SHOULD WORK TO INSURE BELGIAN PROPOSAL DOES NOT RECEIVE EXPLICIT ENDORSEMENT BY COUNCIL. IN THIS CONNECTION WE WELCOME AND ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE LEAD BEING TAKEN BY THE ARGENTINE REPRESENTATIVE TO DEVELOP STRONG LA SUPPORT FOR SCRUTINY OF BELGIAN PROPOSAL. IT APPEARS THAT THE ARGENTINE REP HAS FOCUSED ON THE TWO-KEY CONSIDERATIONS WE SEE: COUNCIL WORKABILITY AND POST-DATING AMENDMENTS. BOTH POINTS HOWEVER MIGHT BE EXPRESSED MORE CLEARLY AND EXPLICITLY, AND WE SUGGEST US REPRESENTATIVE WORK WITH ARGENTINE REP AND OTHERS TO DETERMINE IF FOLLOWING TEXTUAL MODIFICATIONS MIGHT BE ACHIEVED:

(A) ARGENTINE PROPOSAL STATES "COUNCIL DECIDED NOT TO MAKE ANY COMMENT ON PROPOSAL BY BELGIAN," YET IT GOES ON TO PROVIDE COMMENTS. TO CLEAR UP THIS INCONSISTENCY, US REPRESENTATIVE SHOULD SUGGEST THAT "RECOMMENDATION" REPLACE "COMMENT" IN FIRST PARA ARGENTINE DRAFT PROPOSAL.

(B) PARA 2 OF DRAFT PROPOSAL CONCEPT WOULD BE STRENGTHENED IF IT CALLED MORE SHARPLY INTO QUESTION PRACTICABILITY OF HAVING COUNCIL OF GREATER SIZE MEET IN PERMANENT SESSION (SEE PARAS 2 AND 3 ABOVE).

(C) TEXT OF PARA 3 IS AWKWARD AND SHOULD BE REVISED FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GREATER PRECISION. KEY POINT, WE ASSUME, IS THAT APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO COME INTO EFFECT AFTER 1980 COULD PREJUDGE UNFORESEEABLE REQUIREMENTS WHICH MAY BE PRESENT AT THAT TIME AND WOULD NEED TO BE WEIGHED CAREFULLY IN CONTEXT OF FUTURE SITUATION.

5. US REPRESENTATIVE SHOULD DRAW ON PARA 4 ABOVE IN WORKING TO MODIFY LA CAUCUS DRAFT RESOLUTION WITH OBJECTIVE OF

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DEVELOPING MORE EXPLICIT COMMENTARY BY THE COUNCIL ON
BELGIUM PROPOSAL TO GIVE FOCUS TO ASSEMBLY CONSIDERATION.
US REPRESENTATIVE SHOULD WORK TO DIRECT COUNCIL TARD
ADOPTING COMMENTARY, AND NOT RECOMMENDATION, AND MAY
SUPPORT COUNCIL COMMENTARY ALONG FOREGOING LINES. RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEMBERSHIP, MEMBER ADMISSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE111418
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: CGRIP/CNEE:CLARA
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740133-1043
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740513/aaaaalco.tel
Line Count: 120
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: MONTREAL 751
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 APR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <26 MAR 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ICAO-BELGIAN PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE COUNCIL.
TAGS: ETRN, BE, CA, ICAO
To: MONTREAL
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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